



# HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

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## IM Finance Committee Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

The Interoperability Montana (IM) Finance Committee met Mon. Jan. 12 in Helena at the offices of Anderson ZurMuehlen (AZ). Committee Chair Sheriff John Walsh began the meeting by reviewing action items from the previous meetings, all of which had been completed. Bill Fleiner, reviewed highlights from the Dec. 23 work session.

Members discussed the reconciliation of FY05 Dept. of Homeland Security grant monies. Bill and Irene Bushnell, AZ, displayed and reviewed the proposed IM five-year budget, which the committee approved to move forward to the IM Project Directors (IMPD). The latest draft of the Sustainability Plan also was reviewed. The membership fee calculations use an escalator factor that is compounded annually was approved for recommendation to the IMPD.

Irene reported that the All-Source Funding document will continue to be provided monthly to the IMPD along with a breakdown between paid and allocated expenses. Project Directors also may request reports that are allocated by account and/or by site.

Committee members reviewed and approved several Decision/Information Requests (DIRs) with the exception of one that will be sent back to the IM Technical Committee for additional review. Bob McWilliams, IM Technical Committee Chair, reported that waiting for NEPA approvals may delay spring construction plans.

The next IM Finance Committee regular meeting is set for Mon., Feb. 9 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm at AZ, 828 Great Northern Blvd. in Helena.

## IM Governance Committee Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

Bill Fleiner, the Interoperability Montana Governance Committee (IMGC) Chair, presided over the meeting on Mon., Jan. 12 in Helena. Cindy Mullaney, Bylaws Sub-Committee Chair, reported on proposed bylaws changes and an updated membership list. Bob Murdo, Legal Counsel, gave an update on negotiations with a lease agreement and work being done on a Master System User Agreement. Under the Staffing Sub-Committee report, Chair George Gupton, indicated that interviews for the System Administrator and Project Manager positions are scheduled for Jan. 15 and 16.

Bill said that members at a recent working group meeting in Billings are moving forward to develop a system build-out plan for the City of Billings and

Yellowstone County. A needs assessment will be conducted with support from PSSB and the City of Billings to assist the region's integration into the IM system.

Training Sub-Committee Chair Kerry O'Connell said that Mark Adams, Northrop Grumman, is organizing a time for instructors to get together and establish a schedule. Plan also are in the works to develop various training modules. Members discussed the possibility of hosting a FEMA Communications Leader Training session in Montana if enough participants are interested in attending. It's important that this gets developed in jurisdictions for disciplines.

Members reviewed the latest draft of the Sustainability Plan and suggestions for improvement were made. Work continues on the application for the FY09 IEC Grant Program.

The next IMGC meeting will take place on Mon., Feb. 10 at the Dept. of Corrections Annex Building located behind 515 N. Sanders in Helena.

## IM Project Directors Meeting

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

The Interoperability Montana Project Directors (IMPD) met in Helena on Tues., Jan. 13. Dan McGowan, Homeland Security Advisor, gave an overview of a hazard analysis he performed as part of his master's thesis at the Naval Post-Graduate School. The report correlated IM site locations with threats such as earthquakes, tornados, fires, lightning, floods and bombs and evaluated the vulnerability of each site across the state.

Bill Fleiner presented the final draft of the Sustainability Plan and indicated that Appendix F, the Five-Year Build-Out Plan, has not been formally approved by the IM Technical Committee. Several changes were suggested to the membership fee chart. Sheena Wilson, Governor's Office, provided some insight on the latest draft to the Sustainability Plan, and changes will be made as a result of her comments. An IMPD conference call will be scheduled for Mon., Feb. 2 for the IMPD to take action so that the plan is ready to present to legislature at its Feb. 4 hearing.

Members were informed that results of the legislative performance audit would be presented after the IMPD meeting. The report is available at: <http://leg.mt.gov/content/Publications/Audit/Report/08P-03.pdf>.

Kevin Bruski, IM Executive Director, reported on a recent National Governor's Association conference for all State Interoperability Coordinators to meet and discuss roles and responsibilities, SCIPs, grant coordination and outreach. An extension to PSIC



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funding also was discussed and recommended. Kevin also attended a FEMA-sponsored National Grant Program Directorate Conference and volunteered to help resolve and streamline the NEPA process. Kevin also provided a detailed status update on Northern Tier microwave progress.

Chief Michaels formally re-appointed Standing Committee chairs as required by the bylaws, and each chair gave an update on committee activities.

Dick Clark, ISTD CIO, gave a special presentation and said that the Governor's office was recently asked to contribute ideas for projects that would qualify for a federal Economic Stimulus Package. Several "shovel-ready" projects to support IM were proposed and are available for viewing at this link: <http://governor.mt.gov/docs/Infrastructure.pdf>.

Ultimate funding amounts and mechanisms are unknown. Money will have to be obligated within 180 days, which underlines the importance of having site agreements complete.

Mark Adams, Northrop Grumman, gave an update on the status of trunking and Coverage Acceptance Testing. Planning and design on IM-12 site contract is underway and the Mobile Data work plan and questionnaire have been drafted. He presented an overview of all the DIRs on the agenda that had previously been approved by the technical and finance committees. The IMPD approved them.

The next IMPD meeting date will be on Tues, Feb. 10, starting at 9:00 am at the Montana Association of Counties (MACo) large conference room, 2715 Skyway Drive, in Helena.

## I-15/90 Corridor Consortium Meeting

By Scott Bradford [sbradford@mt.gov](mailto:sbradford@mt.gov)

The I-15/90 Corridor Interoperability Consortium met Thurs., Jan. 15, at the Butte Chamber of Commerce. Project Director Dave McPherson provided reports from both the Interoperability Montana Project Directors meeting and Technical Committee meeting. The IM's distribution of the Sustainability Plan, with attached budget and five year build-out, was noted. The Sustainability Plan is currently going through a comment period, with the hope of getting it approved February 2.

The Butler and Anaconda sites were added to the five-year technical build-out plan. PSSB representative Scott Bradford added that Jack Spillman, Flathead County, was appointed as the secondary contact on IM frequency applications and Dorothy Gremaux, Fergus County, was appointed to the IM Technical Administrative Committee (IMTC). Roger Hays, Lewis and Clark County, was elected Vice Chair of the IMTC. Motorola continues

conducting coverage tests along the eastern section of the Northern Tier. Some microwave issues are begin addressed along the eastern side of the Northern Tier, but microwave on the western side is working well.

FCC license issues and NEPA coordination continue to be a significant issue in the consortium. Bob McWilliams continues to work with the IM Project to make sure all the NEPA requirements are covered for consortium infrastructure projects. Project Director Dave McPherson's letter to the congressional delegation resulted in the FCC's commitment that frequency issues should be resolved soon. The IM project, through PSSB, also is seeking additional frequency pairs for Red Mountain in case the FCC determines not to allow use of marine channel frequencies.

The next consortium meeting will begin at 10:00 am at the Butte-Silver Bow Chamber of Commerce, 1000 George St., on Thurs., Feb.19.

## Upcoming Meetings

### Jan. 21

South Central Montana Consortium (SCMIC)  
Big Timber • 10:00 am  
Carnegie Library, 314 McLeod St.

### Jan. 26

IM Technical Committee Meeting  
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm  
MACo Large Conference Room, 2715 Skyway Drive

### Jan. 27

Western Consortium (WICC)  
10:00 am – 12:00 pm; Location to be Announced

### Jan. 28

Tri-County Consortium  
Helena • 10:00 am  
Dept. of Corrections Annex; Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

### Jan. 28

Eastern Tier (ETIC)  
Glendive • 10:00 am  
Dawson County Courthouse Community Rm., 207 W. Bell

### Jan. 29

Big Sky 11 Consortium  
Billings • 10:00 am – noon  
Billings Fire Station #1/EOC - 2300 9th Ave N.

### Feb. 9

IM Governance Committee  
Helena • Noon - 5:00 pm  
Dept. of Corrections Annex; Behind 515 N. Sanders St.

### Feb. 9

IM Finance Committee  
Helena • 10:00 am - 5:00 pm  
Anderson ZurMuehlen • 828 Great Northern Blvd.

### Feb. 10

IM Project Directors (IMPD) Meeting  
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm  
MACo Large Conference Room, 2715 Skyway Drive